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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

PEOPLE AT NIGHT

Nights were not made for the crowds, and they sever
You from your neighbor, so you shall never
Seek him, defiantly, at night.
But if you make your dark house light,
To look on strangers in your room,
You must reflect—on whom.

False lights that on men's faces play
Distort them gruesomely.
You look upon a disarray,
A world that seems to reel and sway,
A waving, glittering sea.
On their foreheads gleams a yellow shine
Where thoughts are chased away.
Their glances flicker mad from wine,
And to the words they say
Strange heavy gestures make reply,
That struggle in the buzzing room;
And they say always, "I" and "I";
And mean—they know not whom.

POETRY AND THE PANAMA-PACIFIC EXPOSITION

Dear POETRY: Do you remember how, when the pinch of war began to be felt in Europe, letters poured in upon you from the poets there? They contained one cry: "Protect the arts! To you in America falls the task of keeping the flame alight, for we are ruined."

The Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco had an unusually favorable chance to respond to the cry of the artists of stricken Europe. But whatever it may have done for the other arts, it has done practically nothing for the poets. Aside from the fact that Mr. Markham is to write an "offi-

Poetry and the Panama-Pacific Exposition

cial poem," there is no recognition whatever of the fact that poetry exists. It is true that as an architectural decoration of the archways certain quotations from Confucius and Walt Whitman are used, and to these the directors point triumphantly. It is significant in this connection that no commercial exhibit is accepted which was in existence at the time of the St. Louis exposition.

Is it not time that poetry should stand squarely on her rights as a living art with a living message, and demand recognition alongside of painting and sculpture? Doubtless practical difficulties would present themselves in the matter of the choice of a jury and the method of setting before the public the poems selected. But these difficulties would be no greater than in the case of painting. And to the many distinguished visitors to the Exposition, not only from Europe but also from the newly awakened Orient, which is gravely examining our western culture, the lack of any recognition of one of the oldest and most revered of the arts cannot but seem significant. It will be difficult to explain to them that the official oblivion on the subject comes not from the lack of excellent material to be exhibited, but from lack of appreciation on the part of a local board of directors. The Panama-Pacific Exposition has lost an excellent chance. It remains for some future Exposition, perhaps the one contemplated in Japan, to be the first to house the lyric muse.

Eunice Tietjens

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Mrs. Tietjens' very reasonable suggestion is being discussed with some asperity along "the Coast," where the paragraphers have had their usual profoundly humorous time with it. Mr. Samuel Travers Clover recently answered some of their objections in his Los Angeles weekly, *The Graphic*, of which Mrs. Tietjens, since her much regretted departure from the POETRY office, has become poetry editor. We quote a part of his editorial:

Mrs. Tietjens' argument that poetry is a "fine art," and in its present renaissance a distinct feature of the cultural progress of our country, ergo, worthy of representation at a national exposition, strikes us as a sound postulate. Surely, she contends, largely considered, poetry is of as much ultimate value as poultry, which occupies more than an acre of space. As to the manner of exhibiting verse her suggestion is that a jury of contemporary poets, reinforced by a professor of literature from one of the universities, and, perhaps, an editor, would be fully as competent to judge the volumes submitted as are contemporary painters to judge the canvases. The volumes accepted could be ranged in book-shelves in a quiet room, where the public could browse at will. "Then," she adds, "since the music of the spoken word is half the magic, periodical readings could be given, either by visiting poets or by someone competent to read their works."

There is nothing bizarre or impractical in her suggestion, we submit. The plan of inviting our modern poets to a congress offers great attraction. With Percy Mackaye, Vachel Lindsay, the "Gospel of Beauty" protagonist; Edgar L. Masters of the *Spoon River Anthology* fame; Edwin L. Markham, George Sterling, our own John McGroarty, Harriet Monroe, Eunice Tietjens, and a score of other living poets of acknowledged merit in attendance, a successful gathering were assured. Then, too, Alfred Noyes might be lured to the coast and perhaps John Masefeld and Stephen Phillips. Popular? We venture to say the poets' section at the Panama-Pacific Exposition would be a loadstone of cultural traffic and repay all expense to the management a hundredfold.

Desertion

DESERTION

Rhyme, supposing that all the poets leave you,
Where will you go to hide yourself away?
Is there no place where honorable Rhyme may stay,
No far elysium where Poetry will receive you?
Where do her veterans dwell, the outworn and gray?
Oh, many a long century you have lived content
In paired delights, or dancing sisterly dances;
Sounds beckoning to sounds like lovers' mutual glances,
Sounds wedded with sounds and shades of sounds, well blent—
Poetry, what new devices will enhance your beauty
As Rhyme, old Rhyme, enhances?

Helen Hoyt

NOTES

Mr. Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, of Greenway, Ledbury, England, is well known as the author of plays in verse and of other poems of English peasant life, published under the titles *Daily Bread*, *Womenkind*, *Fires*, and *Borderlands and Thoroughfares* (Macmillan). Mr. Gibson's poems would have had the lead this month, except that their tragic subject seemed too grim an introduction to a midsummer number.

Mr. William Rose Benét, of New York, who has also appeared before in *POETRY*, is one of the editors of *The Century*, and the author of *Merchants from Cathay* (Century Co.) and *The Falconer of God and Other Poems* (Yale Univ. Press).

Miss Helen Hoyt, of Appleton, Wis., whom we introduced two years ago, has not yet published a volume.

Mr. Nathan Haskell Dole, of Boston, is well known as the author of many books of verse and prose, and the translator and editor of important works from many languages.

Others who, like Mr. Dole, have not hitherto appeared in *Poetry*, are:

Nancy Campbell (Mrs. Joseph Campbell), of Dublin, Ireland, author of *Agnus Dei* (Maunsel).